



Freight transport demand in the mechanics' sector of Friuli Venezia Giulia: the choice between intermodal and road transport

Jacopo Zotti^{1*} and Romeo Danielis¹

¹Department of Economics and Statistics, University of Trieste, Italy

Abstract

During recent years, freight transport has been experiencing an enormous growth, affecting in particular the road transport. In Italy as well as in most developed countries, this has called for appropriate policies aimed at a modal switch. A notable role in this context could be played by intermodal transport. This paper supplies a new transport attributes' evaluation, estimating the possibility that firms rely on intermodal transport rather than on road transport. Consistently, the transport mode is threaded as a choice attribute. Differently from other studies (see for example Matear and Gray, 1993 and Lu, 2000), the modelling framework introduces attribute cut-offs (Swait, 2001), in order to account for a two-stage decision process. The dataset used for this study is the result of 30 interviews, which have been realised in the Italian region of Friuli Venezia Giulia. Results show that the transport mode does not represent a discriminatory choice variable, while attributes related to the quality level of the service (e.g. damages and losses) are as important as cost attributes.

Keywords: Discrete choice models; Freight transport attributes; Cut-offs.

1. Introduction

The van Miert report dating back to the end of June 2003 represents, after the White Book, an important moment for the transportation politics in the enlarged EU, introducing a new vision of the European transportation system. It replaces the traditional individual mode approach with the concept of a seamless intermodal transportation system which is to be efficient, safe and environmentally sound. In this framework the intermodal transport has to be considered as a possible alternative to currently adopted more road-oriented solutions.

In this background, this paper aims to analyse the position of the freight transport demand with reference to the introduction of politics supporting the intermodal transport. The importance given by the mechanics' companies of the Italian region of Friuli Venezia Giulia to the attributes of the transport service is investigated, giving particular attention to the modal choice.

* Corresponding author: J. Zotti (jacopo.zotti@econ.units.it)